

House Resolution 1013

By: Representatives Stephens of the 161st, Gordon of the 162nd, Marin of the 96th, Mitchell of the 88th, Jordan of the 77th, and others

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Commending the St. Benedict the Moor Catholic Church; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, the St. Benedict the Moor Catholic Church is the oldest black parish in Georgia
3 and the second oldest existing parish in Savannah; and
- 4 WHEREAS, named for St. Benedict the Black, patron saint to African Americans, the parish
5 was created when two Benedictine monks established a monastery in 1874 and a church,
6 originally situated at East Broad and Harris Street. In 1889, a new St. Benedict was built
7 four blocks south on East Broad at Gordon, its present location; and
- 8 WHEREAS, staffed by Franciscan Sisters, St. Benedict the Moor Catholic Church's day
9 school operated from 1907 until its closure in 1969, due to integration, and its alumni include
10 U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas; and
- 11 WHEREAS, the sisters of St. Benedict the Moor Catholic Church also staffed the orphanage
12 established by Mother Matilda Beasley, the first African American Woman in Georgia to
13 belong to a religious order; and
- 14 WHEREAS, from its humble beginnings in this coastal city, the St. Benedict the Moor
15 Catholic Church has grown and prospered and is now one of the leading churches in
16 Chatham County; and
- 17 WHEREAS, during the struggles and triumphs of its 135 years of existence, the St. Benedict
18 the Moor Catholic Church has been led by many able and dedicated priests who have offered
19 wise and dedicated leadership and service to the congregation and to the community; and
- 20 WHEREAS, the Georgia Historical Society honored St. Benedict the Moor Catholic Church
21 with a historical marker on October 15, 2008, in recognition of its heritage and its great
22 importance to Chatham County, the State of Georgia, and the nation; and

23 WHEREAS, the rich history of St. Benedict the Moor Catholic Church, as well as its
24 traditions and contributions, is worthy of appropriate recognition.

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
26 the members of this body commend the St. Benedict the Moor Catholic Church for its many
27 years of steadfast, unselfish, and loving service to the people of this state, extend their most
28 sincere congratulations on the dedication of the historical marker, and wish the congregation
29 continued growth and prosperity.

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
31 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the St. Benedict the Moor
32 Catholic Church.